GE Sensing (formerly GE Thermometrics)

Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center

GE Sensing Parlays Lean Principles into Savings

Client Profile:
GE Sensing, formerly GE Thermometrics, manufactures thermistors (both PTC, Positive Temperature Coefficient, and NTC, Negative Temperature Coefficient) for automotive and commercial applications. The company employs 159 people at its facility in Saint Marys, Pennsylvania.

Situation:
GE Sensing was seeking efficiency improvements and contacted the DuBois campus of Penn State University for training in the Lean Manufacturing techniques of Quick Changeover and Cellular Flow by a staff member of the Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:
NWIRC conducted two Lean classes and simulation exercises for several GE Sensing employees. In the Lean 204 Quick Changeover/Set-up Reduction class, participants learned the principles of Setup Reduction and the Single Minute Exchange of Dies (SMED) system. They then applied the four-step Changeover Improvement Process to achieve setup reduction in a life-like simulation exercise. Participants experienced reduced costs and setup times and saw machine capacity increase at the same time. The Lean 205 Cellular/Flow Manufacturing class covered the basic elements of a transformation from traditional to cellular manufacturing. It guides participants through the process of grouping products, establishing Takt time, reviewing the work sequence, and balancing the process to design an effective cell. Participants experienced the results of Cellular/ Flow Manufacturing principles as applied in a life-like simulation. They then helped transform a traditional batch production area to a cellular layout and saw the dramatic changes in the way the product flows, so that customer demand is met -- on time, every time.

Results:
* Projected savings of $50,000.

Testimonial:
"The education provided to our employees by NWIRC will help us to implement the Lean principles that were explained to us. As a result, we expect to see significant savings from this valuable project."
Victor Marquez, Human Resources Manager